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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3659th meeting of the Security Council, held on 25 April 1996 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has taken note of the letter dated 12 April 1996 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Council on the present situation in Burundi (S/1996/313), in response to the request to the Secretary-General in resolution 1049 (1996) to keep the Council informed on the situation.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned at the recent degeneration of security conditions and political cooperation in Burundi. The Council condemns all acts of violence. The Council is equally concerned at reported statements calling for the arming of civilians which could lead to grave consequences. The dramatic increase in violence throughout the country already severely inhibits humanitarian aid and could have a negative effect on the donors' capacity to implement development assistance in support of the search by the people of Burundi for reconciliation and rehabilitation.

"The Security Council urges the authorities and all parties in Burundi to set aside their differences and demonstrate the necessary cohesion, unity and political will for settlement of the conflict by peaceful means. The Council calls upon all Burundians to renounce the use of violence and to engage in a comprehensive dialogue to ensure a peaceful future for the people of Burundi.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned at the widespread purchase and use of weapons by Burundians, in particular the laying of landmines.

"The Security Council looks forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General in the report which it requested by 1 May 1996 on the progress towards commencement of the National Debate and other initiatives for comprehensive political dialogue and national reconciliation. The Council extends its full support for and confidence in the efforts of the

Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and those of former President Nyerere and other envoys to facilitate negotiations to resolve the present crisis.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with paragraph 13 of resolution 1049 (1996), to expedite consultations with Member States concerned and the Organization of African Unity, as appropriate, on contingency planning both for the steps that might be taken to support a comprehensive dialogue and for a rapid humanitarian response in the event of widespread violence or serious deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Burundi.

"The Security Council underlines its commitment to follow events in Burundi closely and resolves to consider further all relevant options for an appropriate response by the international community upon receipt of the impending report of the Secretary-General."